

During the 17-18 academic year The Stand at San Diego Mesa College sent out two surveys (fall and spring) to student who had used our services. We asked them for permission to share their stories.

In this space share your story and speak on how The Stand has impacted you positively?

FEEDING STUDENTS

At times when I was running late or my mom didn't have the opportunity to go grocery shopping, I knew that I can get food at The Stand. I wasn't worried where I would find lunch or basic necessities because it was close by. I told some friends and they were happy as well.

The stand has helped so much when I couldn't afford food

If it wasn't for the stand I wouldn't be able to eat due to the high cost of living in California. I work and it's still not enough to live on while attending school. The income inequality has gotten worse and more difficult for the middle & lower class to get ah as in life.

Before the stand lack of food would cause me to get poor grades.

I was a recipient of Calfresh benefits until I enrolled as a full time student at Mesa college. The only way I could continue to receive benefits was if I were enrolled part time or employed while being enrolled as a full time student. From that point forward I had been stealing food from local groceries stores, until I was chased out of a Vons by one of their employees. That incident ultimately left me feeling helpless. The next day I decided to ask around to see if there was any type of food assistance program on campus, which is when I learned that the stand was available to Mesa college students. If it wasn't for the stand, I would have definitely dropped out of school. Those who truly know what it feels like to go without food know that when hunger strikes it is the only thing on your mind and nothing else matters until you can find a decent meal. From lack of concentration to fatigue, it is almost impossible to focus on the task at hand when all your body wants and needs is food. There were several time throughout the semester that I would not have been able to focus in class if I was not able to grab a snack from the stand beforehand. Words cannot explain how great-full I am that the stand was available to me when I truly needed it.

The assistance was attainable when I thought that I was out of options . Stand offered me food when I was living out of my car and unable to afford anything. Thank you for the help.

There is nothing like being able to take a quick break and receive a pick me up of an energy bar. It doesn't seem like much to many, but there are many studies that support correlation of food availability with grades. There is no denying this link.

On empty stomach and no energy no one can study thank you for your help.

I was able to get even a little food when i didn't have any and share with friends that didn't have any food also, even if it meant me going half as much as i wanted to eat. Many students barely afford rent and I have even lived out of my car before and though it's not the case at the moment, I am so grateful there are programs like this. It would just be nice if there were healthier options.

This past semester, Spring 2018, I had classes all day Tuesdays and Thursdays, and couldn't afford to buy lunch/dinner on campus, or even bring food from home to last all day because the food I had was often perishable. The Stand at Mesa College has conveniently and consistently provided me with decent meals throughout the semester, and I probably would have gone hungry and/or been calorie-deficient without this valuable food service provided to me. I am very grateful for The Stand and hope that it continues to serve future students who are found in the same predicament as I was, or who are generally in need.

The stand has impacted me positively because sometimes when I didn't have any money to buy food I would go where to get some foods.

Sometimes and no idea how I was going to eat and I was so starving didn't think I could sit through class but because I found out that this was available I was able to go and stop by before or after class and actually get at least a snack or something to eat and it really helped out

I'm a FFY at Mesa, I have limited income and it goes to meeting my housing needs. The stand helps me with food so I may stay concentrate and healthy to stay attend class and stay in school.

There were times I came to school without eating breakfast, because I was rushing out the door to get to school on time. But i always had Stand as an option for when i missed meals.

As a college student it is sometimes hard to find the time and money to eat regularly or between a busy class schedules. As a dance student in particular eating is even more important. The Stand provides the perfect service for a quick snack between classes and rehearsals.

Class is hard enough. The stand is easy enough to undo or help fuel a tough day of exams.

The Stand is such a blessing. I truly struggled to afford food for the past couple of years. There were days where I would have classes for up to six hours a day (combined with homework time) and my stomach would be growling in the library. Once my friend introduced me to this program, I was able to pick up snacks and even full meals. Thankfully I was no longer going to bed hungry. Thank you so much Mesa!

I am a single African-Mestizo male veteran working toward a Major in Arts/Dance. Due to the services of "The Stand" at Mesa College I can concentrate more in class because I wouldn't be distracted from actually being hungry and it's allowed me to extend my budget for food. Thank You

During the last week of the Fall 2017 semester, there were a couple of times that I was so hungry and didn't have enough money to buy food. Then, I went to The Stand to pick up some food. For me, it was really mean something because those food (although not much) helped me go through difficult time as well as do better at my finals study.

My name Linh Bui. I have been in the U.S for two years. This is my third semester at Mesa College. First, i try to improve my English skills. Second, i want to get a college degree. I face with too many difficult problems in this time. For example, I have worked 18 hour per week while I take full time classes at Mesa College. My income is not enough now. I prepare my food to eat in order to reduce my cost. I never buy drink or snack. Luckily, my friend told me how to get food and clothes at The Stand. I attended and received many helpful here. Sometimes i can get a snack, milk, drink or nice clothes. It is necessary to help me .One more time, I want to thank The Stand and remind myself to keep going on because I know the school always help me.

I have a bigger family with parents who work or are busy a lot of the time. I'm struggling to find a job but have been unsuccessful for many reasons. A lot of times I wasn't able to eat all day because I couldn't afford to buy food or because I didn't have enough at home to bring to school with me. The Stand provided me with enough food to get me through the long days.

I can get something to eat and gain energy

I was first introduced to The Stand on my first semester of college (Fall 2017). The Stand strongly impacted my life because it helped me save money from buying snacks and drinks at the Mesa Store, bookstore, and the cafeteria. There were a variety of healthy snacks to choose from at The Stand which really helped me balance what I eat and do.

The Stand has given me, a new lease on life because before I used to worry that I would collapse from not eating nor sleeping enough now I don't have either of those worry's. Thank you Stand for helping me when no one else could.

It has helped me with being more focused on class because I no longer worry about when my next meal is.

Last semester I fell into some major financial difficulty and had no source of financial income and could not afford regular groceries. It was hard to concentrate on school stuff when I couldn't even meet my basic needs! The stand was an amazing help in supplementing some food as well as connecting me with other community resources. It has been such a blessing and I am very thankful for the stand on campus and everyone else who has helped me!

I have had days without food and the stand had offered me free food services

During my first semester of college, I was struggling without financial aid and affording things for school. I found it very helpful that the stand was there to help provide me with food when majority of the time, I'd forget to pack or just wasn't able to

My family and I fell on tough times during the semester. There were sometimes complete weeks at a time that the only reason I ate was thanks to The Stand.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

I was homeless at the age of 14, I barely survived high school and when I got into college I was worried that I might not have gotten the same rescues I got in high school like meals and clothes. With the stand, I was able to get new clothes and meals.

During my Fall 2017 semester in college I was going through a rough patch. Me and my husband were living in his truck and were looking to begin a life together working while I finished my school. He had finished all of his school but was going through a process in which he could not yet work. We got to eat a few nights from The Stand. Even when we found a studio we were able to get our first groceries regardless of the fact we used all our money for the rent's deposit.

I had been living out of my vehicle for nearly a year. I had enough food for about 2 more meals in my trunk. Uncertain of where I would sleep that night, stressing about school, fearful about the effects on others of me not paying my bills and I was hungry and didn't want to waste the last of my food.

On the verge of tears and a mental breakdown, a dear friend in my dance and music class said she was going to get free food, and asked if I wanted to join her!

After a moment of overwhelm wanting to run away from it all I found peace and support.

I am sooo grateful for the Stand. My limited words cannot accurately convey the depth of my appreciation for this amazing service.

I will always look back on this help from the Stand as a pivotal and crucial component that set me up for success. Not only did they provide the sustenance of food, they also offered the blessing of professional attire.

The Stand is by far one of the greatest blessings in my life this year. I am eternally grateful for the support provided by San Diego Mesa College. Thank YOU SOO MUCH for Your Time, Love and Energy.

Peace, Love, Light and Blessings,

Peter

INSPIRING STUDENTS

It has helped me understand the financial burden that a lot of students go through and how much they need to rely on others to help them. It makes me want to help my community more often!

JOBS FOR STUDENTS

The stand has positively impacted my life by allowing me to acquire professional clothing that helped me succeed in my internship.

I had been actively seeking employment for months, and when I finally got called in for an interview I realized I had absolutely no professional attire to wear. In about a week, I was able to find the Stand, and use their services to find the perfect blouse and cardigan for my interview. Fortunately, I ended up getting the job and am extremely grateful that the Stand was able to help me out.

I found out about the stand when I went to a job fair on campus. They supplied food, hygiene products, and interview clothes. I'm plus size and had to dig through multiple piles of clothes but I was able to find multiple shirts and pants that fit.

Got me a job and gave opportunities

The stand has helped me on my job interviews.

Overall Services Statements

When my counselor Sue Schrader hands had told me about the stand I was actually starving that day and I went in there and they were just amazing to me that was so nice I had also learned about this service from my professor dr. Veronica Gerace

Stand had help me a lot from the very start. When one of the employee brought me, to Stand for the first time, to used some clothing, to wear for my interview .it bring me a lot of blessing I got a part time job in Sprouts Markets. And during the semester, once in a while I come to Stand on Mesa for some clothing and food and accessories. And I would like thank you all again, also for the 50 Dollar gift card it help me a lot thorough the whole semester. Sincerely Maria

The Stand is a wonderful way to get things you need, especially if most of your money goes to bills. It is convenient and holds such a variety of things. Not just snacks, but canned food (vegetables) as well. It was also a great place if you are short on toiletries like deodorant or bathroom tissue. This was wonderful for me, and I imagine it makes all the difference for some.

I could have hope because of those people trying to help me.

Very helpful and reassuring

The stand has relieved me from a lot of hardships with helping provide food from stand gift cards to cafeteria also bookstore with helping provide some book voucher help. Also gave me some Xmas help at the last min to help provide a few things to my children. Thank you Johanna and staff

I only found out about The Stand at the end of Spring 2018 semester. I saw a poster by the elevator. I hurried to The Stand and looked through the clothing as I want to dress more professional for my classes as if I am on the job. I didn't see anything that day, but I did get some lotions, hair care. I appreciate The Stand is there for students, and myself, so I can have a resource that I can depend on. The Stand helps me to know people care about others and me. I am grateful for the people who donate to make help for us students available.

The stand was a blessing for me. I am very grateful to the staff and Johanna for providing such useful resources and extending the points. I was able to eat nutritious snacks/foods in between my classes which kept me mentally alert and physically hydrated. I am extremely grateful for the diapers provided which helped me at times when I ran out of money for diapers for my children. Thank you so much!

The Stand offered me a place to find professional attire for my upcoming interview. It also provided me with snacks to eat in between my finals. The Stand has other supplies that are very beneficial if I ever needed emergency bathroom items or hygiene products.

I thank the stand and everyone who has worked there for all the donations for any one of us students that partook in these services. It has helped me a great deal in more ways than one. I was able to focus on my studies and job interviews in a much better way thanks to the STAND.

I couldn't have completed my studies without the food The Stand provided, I used to come to school hungry and unable to afford lunch! This was such a valuable resource available to students. I was able to concentrate on my studies since I wasn't thinking about my hunger. I was also promoted at my job my manager said that she was impressed that I always wear a blazer to work! I got all my blazers at The Stand! Thank you from the bottom of my heart! I just graduated after 30 years of attending Mesa and City have been accepted to UCSD, The Stand helped me reach my goals. Thank you!

They have been so helpful and kind in their caring ways.

The Stand helps me out. Thank you all for the help.

The Stand has helped me with my job interviews.

It's great that The Stand is open to all students despite income level. It allows all students to come in throughout the day and in between classes to get a snack. This allows students to keep their energy level up between attending lectures, tutoring and doing homework.

As a part time student and part time employee, I have a hard time affording food and clothes. I was so blessed to be able to be one of the first students to use STAND. This program has helped me so much, it is very comforting to know that when you are hungry STAND is there to help provide. It is definitely one less stressful thing I can stop worrying about as a student.

It's not that we're very poor, but it's difficult sometimes when I'm at school all day and don't have extra money for food. It really helped me in that area. I found professional clothing for my boyfriend and myself.

I found out about The Stand through a friend. When I checked it out, I was very relieved to see the wide selection of food and necessities it had. It was like I had access to a secret food stash (that also had formal clothes)! I'm so glad that The Stand exists. Because there have been a few days where I was planning on not having lunch, but The Stand pulled through.

It really helped me financially and mentally to grab anything I wanted and use.

Stand encourages me more when I'm in Campus and my life goad.

just when we have to pay bills and we can't afford small things, it's usually at the stand so it makes me feel like even if money is tight i have support somewhere

Honestly, I haven't had much experience using The Stand as this is my first semester using it. What I do want to express is how grateful I am that services like this even exist in the first place. Helping out students who are in need of food and clothing is the most touching thing I've ever heard of. Thank you so much for all that you do. And keep up the great work.

At first I was not aware of the stand for a couple of days, but my EOPS counselor told me there was The Stand. It provides many sources, for example food, great amount of protein and health, Clothing for interview, which were free of charge and utilities of hair product, pads for females, and even school supplies. It may be all great but make sure not to spend all of your points in one day. I would highly recommend for freshman and other college students to use The Stand always to ensure that you will be successful in having everything you need for school and for your personal life as well.

The stand had a positive impact on my learning experience at Mesa College by allowing me to get any necessary items such as snacks, and hygiene products at times when I couldn't afford to spend either money or time to leave between classes. It's a wonderful addition to our campus community and my life.

The stand gave me an opportunity to have healthy snacks throughout the semester. I also received some clothes that I was able to wear to an interview where I actually got hired. Thank you for all of your help.

I like to thank you all ..It really help me a lot the clothing and some food items that i bring home and share with my family.

I am really grateful.

It has always been there for me when I've needed it!